

"Judge" Rutherford

BY REV. H. THURSTON, S. J.



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- ,, 71. Freedom of Thought.** By the same.
- ,, 98. The After Life.** By W. J. Blyton.
- ,, 17. Agnosticism.** By T. Corbishley.
- ,, 33. Thoughts for Freethinkers.** By Mgr. Canon W. Barry, D.D.
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- ,, 91. The Existence of God.** By Rev. R. F. Clarke, S.J.
- ,, 82. The Beginning and End of Man.** By Rt. Rev. Mgr. Ronald A. Knox, M.A.
- ,, 97. Catholicism and the Modern Mind.** By Michael De La Bedoyère.
- ,, 93. Faith Healing in the Gospels.** By Rev. R. H. J. Steuart, S.J.
- ,, 144. Evolution.** By Prof. L. Renouf, D.Sc.

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"JUDGE" RUTHERFORD

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LONDON :

CATHOLIC TRUTH SOCIETY

“JUDGE” RUTHERFORD*

FOR the past year London and several other great towns have been suffering from a plague of “Watchtower” pamphlets; the most noteworthy being a tract entitled *Face the Facts*, which is often accompanied with other leaflets and more or less provocative appeals.

This literature has been thrust into the hands of people leaving church, it has been pushed under street-doors, it has been delivered by post, thrown into areas, or left about in waiting-rooms.

Face the Facts purports to be the report of an address delivered by a certain “Judge” Rutherford in the autumn of last year at the Albert Hall, Kensington; but the pamphlet itself bears the imprint “made in the United States of America,” and its spellings give further evidence of trans-Atlantic origin. Another notice on the cover proclaims “first printing 10,000,000 copies,” which is strangely contradicted by an advertisement in the Watchtower periodical *Consolation* for January, 1939, which says of the same tract “first printing 12,000,000 copies.” For statistics, compiled as the statistics of these sectaries seem to be compiled, a variation of a couple of millions is apparently a matter of little moment.

Whether the alleged 10 or 12 million copies have all been distributed in England is not clear. A rough arithmetical computation shows that the weight of 10,000,000 such tracts would be something over 440 tons, and the freight for bringing them across the Atlantic would entail considerable expense.

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As for the tone of the Rutherford pamphlet, which has very naturally roused the indignation of those Catholics who have had the curiosity to look into it, a single specimen may for the present suffice. On page 43 we read :

Catholic 'Blasphemy'

The great mass of the people that have lived since the flood have been wicked. To-day the earth is filled with a wicked class similar to that which filled the earth prior to the flood. The most wicked and blasphemous of all those who now encumber the earth are the religious leaders, and particularly those who constitute the Roman Catholic Hierarchy of authority, who blasphemously claim that which belongs only to God, falsely claim that they are the representatives of the Lord, bring great reproach upon God's name, and persecute Jehovah's witnesses.

To this utterance Mr. Rutherford, whose literary style, in the matter of split infinitives and errors of syntax, leaves much to be desired, appends the clause "and which religious organization (i.e., the Catholic Church) is the chief instrument of the devil on earth."

There are at least a dozen other passages in the pamphlet which are hardly less offensive, but at this stage it is needless to quote further.

Bible and Tract Society

Before we come to deal with "Judge" Rutherford's personal activities, it is important to notice that "The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society," which is responsible for the publication of this literature, is not an institution of recent date. It was the creation of an American preacher and social agitator, one Charles Taze Russell, commonly known as "Pastor Russell." The society was incorporated in the State of Pennsylvania in 1884, and remained entirely under Russell's personal control until his death in 1916. Since then his mantle has fallen on Rutherford's shoulders,

not, I fancy, without certain heart-burnings among the entourage of the founder, but it is Rutherford, in any case, who now does most of the trumpeting and declaiming, his vituperative energy being apparently the special qualification which has raised him to this position of eminence.

Shortly after Pastor Russell's death Rutherford got an article accepted by the *Overland Monthly* (a Californian journal) for April, 1917, in which the deceased agitator was eulogized as the greatest religious teacher of the age.

"His weekly sermons," Rutherford there alleged, "were handled by a newspaper syndicate. More than 2,000 newspapers, with a combined circulation of 15 million readers, at one time published his discourses." And in another passage we are told : "His writings are said to have a greater newspaper circulation every week than those of any other living man ; a greater, doubtless, than the combined circulation of the writings of all the priests and preachers in North America."

Pastor Russell's Activities

However much we may discount these partisan statements, there can be no doubt that Russell was a very forceful character with a wonderfully keen eye for publicity. He was born, we learn, in 1852, and, though religiously educated, he had become a complete sceptic before he was 17. Devoting his energies to some sort of haberdashery business, he is said in a few years to have made a fortune of £50,000.

Meanwhile his interests reverted to the Bible and the study of social problems. Already before 1880 he had written a booklet on *The Object and Manner of Our Lord's Return*, in which he maintained that the second coming of Jesus had been fixed for 1874, though this parousia was now in invisible form. In 1879 he began to publish a magazine,

The Watchtower and Herald of Christ's Presence, and in 1884 he founded the Watchtower Society. To this period belongs the book, *The Divine Plan of the Ages* (forming Vol. I of his *Studies in the Scriptures*), with regard to which Russell before his death claimed that five and a half million copies of this volume of 380 pages had been printed and disposed of. It is thus, and perhaps not least of all in America, that people are impressed.

'The Drama of Creation'

Further, when Russell in the interests of his Watchtower Society, began to travel through the United States, and indeed all over the world, delivering addresses, there was one thing which, as he very shrewdly discerned, might be counted on more than anything else to lend power to his words. Rutherford declared in the *Overland Monthly*, and we may probably trust a public statement which so openly challenged refutation:

During the 42 years of Pastor Russell's Christian work he never, directly or indirectly, solicited money. No collection was ever taken up at any meeting addressed by him, or any of his associates, for himself or for his work. . . . The fact that voluntary subscriptions were liberally made by many persons throughout the world showed that his conclusions were correct.

Without seeking to disparage the preacher's motives, this much-advertised disinterestedness was undoubtedly a sound financial policy. The voluntary offerings which flowed in enabled him to print his millions of volumes of subversive literature. Neither did he confine himself to books, pamphlets, and oratorical addresses. He produced a film, the *Drama of Creation*—an unpleasant film, in the judgment of many critics, casting obloquy upon all institutional Christianity—and his lieutenant makes bold to declare in arresting italics that: "Nine million persons

have seen this great exhibition in America alone, and that too 'seats free and no collection.' "

There is a good deal more that needs to be said about Pastor Russell's purpose and the trend of his influence, but these comments will be more in place later. At present I want only to call attention to a different matter, his early references to the year 1914 as a momentous epoch in the world's history. Great capital was made out of this prediction in the last years of his life, and it has constantly been appealed to since, as if thereby the seal of divine authentication had been set upon the whole Watchtower teaching.

Russell an Adventist

Russell was, of course, an Adventist. He believed that Our Lord's second coming had already taken place, albeit invisibly, and that the destruction of the present order of things was imminent in the near future. Moreover, it was to be followed immediately by the millenium.

His arguments, like those of all other Adventists, were based upon the data furnished by the Book of Daniel and the Apocalypse, and depended largely upon the identification of the Church of Rome (the Scarlet Woman and the mother of harlots) with the "leopard beast" (Apoc. xiii. 2) and the "little horn" of Daniel (vii. 8). By a system of calculation, which I have no intention of trying to expound, but which anyone can read for himself in *Studies in the Scriptures*, Vol. II, Russell had been led from the year 1874, when in his view Christ returned invisibly to earth, to infer that the destruction of the impenitent kingdoms of the world would occur after 40 years, and therefore in 1914. The mission of Jesus had begun with His baptism in A.D. 30, and 40 years later, in A.D. 70, the destruction of Jerusalem had followed. By the same analogy he contended that the

coming of Christ in 1874 determined the overthrow of the existing order of things in 1914. A more puerile process of deduction can hardly be conceived.

Russell a False Prophet

Nevertheless it is certain that Pastor Russell, even before the nineteenth century came to an end, had pitched upon 1914 as a year full of momentous consequences. His followers have ever since continued to appeal to this marvellous prediction as a proof that their leader was guided by the Spirit of God.

What they have not called attention to is the fact that he himself had repeatedly proclaimed that 1914 was to mark the end of the times of tribulation, not the beginning.

He wrote, for example: "We consider it an established truth that the final end of the kingdoms of this world and the full establishment of the Kingdom of God will be accomplished at the close of A.D. 1914"; or again: "With the end of A.D. 1914 what God calls Babylon, and what men call Christendom, will have passed away, as already shown from prophecy."

A quarter of a century has elapsed since 1914, but we all can see that the kingdoms of this world are now as active and as full of evils as they have been at any time since history began.

Pastor Russell made bold to forecast the future, but he is convincingly proved by his own words to have been a false prophet.

Pastor Russell and his Critics

Pastor Russell was not only a prophet, self-inspired of course; but he assumed all the functions of the prophets of old, censuring the delinquencies of those in high places and scattering broadcast threats of calamity and woe.

It was natural that such a man should himself become the subject of a good deal of personal criticism, for he sought the limelight, and publicity was to him as the breath of his nostrils. Towards the end of his life that criticism had become rather intense. The *Brooklyn Eagle*, a newspaper which made war on frauds, had taken the matter up with a pertinacity which left him little peace.

It is not easy for anyone like myself, writing on this side of the Atlantic where files of American journals are practically inaccessible, to investigate the rights and wrongs of a fierce controversy which continued in the United States for many years. But I have before me a helpful booklet on the subject, "published," as it states, "in Great Britain by Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, Craven-terrace, London, W."

'Greatest Living Preacher'

Like nearly all the literature of this type, it is not dated, but internal evidence shows that it was written before Russell's death in 1916 and later than April, 1915. It is entitled *A Great Battle in the Ecclesiastical Heavens as Seen by a Lawyer*, and the "lawyer" is no other than Mr. J. F. Rutherford, whose signature in facsimile is attached to the preface.

The contents of this pamphlet of 50 pages are very varied, but we find indented side-notes, printed in capitals, which call attention to points of special importance. In one we may read: PASTOR RUSSELL GREATEST LIVING BIBLE STUDENT. If this be true, his knowledge must have come by Divine inspiration, for critics have shown that he was woefully ignorant of Greek and Hebrew, and indeed of any other language than his own. Another such note tells us that he was THE GREATEST LIVING PREACHER, which is proved by the fact that hundreds of newspapers printed his sermons—having, it is unkindly averred, been subsidized

for that purpose. So again the reader's sympathies are appealed to by such a caption as this: PAPAL ROME AND HER MONGREL PROGENY AGAINST ONE MAN.

Tributes from Followers

A substantial part of the pamphlet is devoted to "character witnesses"; for which purpose testimonials from his followers are facsimiled and long lists of names are cited, but they are the names of men associated for the dissemination of Russell's peculiar views of Scripture exegesis. Not one of them is a name which would be recognized in this country, or in the U.S.A., as that of an American scholar of known standing.

Further, if Rutherford, writing for English readers, had wanted to produce something of evidential value he would surely have printed the testimony, if any had been available, of frequenters of the London Tabernacle (Russell's own church) who were eminent as public men or leaders of thought. In place of that, under the heading "Pastor Russell regarded by Others—How?" Rutherford prints in full a "phrenograph", in other words an appraisal of Pastor Russell's bumps, contributed by "David Dall, D.Ph." (? Doctor of Phrenology), at Motherwell in Scotland. This gentleman, who is described as "Professor Dall," and as "a noted mental scientist of the British Institute of Mental Science, H.M. Phrenologist"—the H.M. is apparently meant to convey that Mr. Dall had been appointed phrenologist to His Majesty King George V—delivers his verdict on the character of the founder of the Watchtower in such terms as these. I quote only the first few sentences:

I have much pleasure in giving a sketch of the genial and fatherly head and physiognomy of Pastor Russell. He is just one of those men whose appearance, suavity, wit, goodness of heart and soundness of head do credit to his

profession. Well up in years, he has a youthful, kindly, and sympathetic nature, fatherly and benign in counsel, moral and spiritual in his influence. In religion his "doxy" is broadened by the effulgent light of Bible study. His temperamental development is very even. If there is a predominance of either, it is found in the motive, which supports an intense energy of mind that cannot dream life away, but must be practical. I find the head of Pastor Russell to be a large one, and the brain gifted with an uncommon degree of activity. A full basilar region is accompanied by the powerful endowment of the moral, intellectual, and spiritual natures. . . .

What I have quoted is about a quarter of the whole tribute, which continues throughout in the same tone. Can it be believed that it is "Judge" Rutherford, a lawyer, trained, we are led to suppose, in estimating the value of evidence, who prints this rubbish to vindicate the character of a client attacked in a score of unsavoury lawsuits? No doubt the advocate is shrewd. He knows that the big words of a "professor" with mysterious letters after his name will go down with the sort of public which his pamphlet aims at influencing. But he also completely shatters the credit which sober people might otherwise be disposed to attach to the testimony of distant witnesses of whom they know nothing. If we are to form an opinion we must look for evidence elsewhere.

The Dictionary of American Biography

In this country when a question arises as to the reputation of anyone who has figured at all prominently in public life, the natural court of appeal is our *Dictionary of National Biography*. Within the last dozen years a similar work has been brought to completion in America. It was set in hand "under the auspices of the American Council of

Learned Societies," and this scholarly publication, the *Dictionary of American Biography*, running to more than a score of volumes, bears the imprint in England of Humphrey Milford at the Oxford University Press. In Vol. XVI (1935) of this work we have an account of Charles Taze Russell, in the course of which his early life is briefly sketched, and something is said of his becoming pastor of an Independent church at Pittsburgh, as well as of his preaching, his publications and their wide diffusion. But there are other matters also touched on, for example, the following :

In 1909 his wife, Maria Frances⁷ Ackley, whom he had married in 1879, brought suit for divorce, alleging immoral conduct on Russell's part with female members of the church. The divorce was granted, and though appealed against five times by Russell, was always sustained.

Sale of 'Miracle Wheat'

This seems to have made it convenient for Russell in 1910 to leave his native country for a while. He journeyed to Palestine, where, we are told, "his speeches exerted some influence on the nascent Zionist movement," after which the statement in the *Dictionary of American Biography* goes on :

The next year he was in further trouble, owing to the sale in his church (at sixty shillings a bushel) of so-called "Miracle Wheat," alleged to possess new and very marvelous agricultural properties. Exposed by the *Brooklyn Daily Eagle* he sued the paper for \$100,000 damages in October, 1911, but lost the case. In the midst of these difficulties he sailed away on a trip round the world, paying attention to missionary work in the Orient. On his return he was given a great reception in the Hippodrome by thousands of New York Jews. The scandals connected with his name do not seem to have materially lessened his

influence. During all the later years of his life, aside from special trips, he averaged annually over thirty thousand miles of travel in visiting his various pastorates, including that of the "London Tabernacle," one of the strongest centres of Russellism.

There were other scandals of a financial nature associated with Russell's name, but what has been said suffices. The one remaining point to which I should like to draw attention is the fact just mentioned that in his travels through the U.S.A. and elsewhere he averaged 30,000 miles a year.

Pastor Russell's Finances

The interest of this is that Rutherford in his pamphlet, *A Great Battle*, gives the impression that Russell divested himself of all his possessions and lived a life of the most apostolic poverty. We are told in fact : "Pastor Russell now has no money, no bank account and owns no property aside from a few personal effects, nor does any one hold any property or money for his personal benefit." It is also said that he only drew a pittance of 12 dollars a month as his salary from the "Watchtower Society."

All this may be true in a sense, and also the fact that he made over all his money to the Watchtower Society, but Russell himself *was* in reality the Watchtower Society ; at any rate he had complete control of it. The fact that the money was legally owned by a corporation had the convenience that he could always plead "no estate" when pecuniary claims were made against him personally. This seems to have been the pretext upon which the alimony due to his wife was for a long time withheld. Also one asks, how it was that a man who had no banking account or real property was able to bring suit after suit, and for the most part unsuccessfully, in the American law courts.

Who, I wonder, paid the costs of the five abortive

appeals against the decree of divorce granted to his wife? Litigation is generally supposed to be one of the most expensive of luxuries.

30,000 Miles — Expenses Paid

Finally it is expressly admitted by Rutherford that Russell was allowed his "travelling expenses." For a man who travelled 30,000 miles a year these must have been considerable, and they presumably included his hotel bills. And who but Russell himself decided how far he would go, or where and how long he should stay on these missions?

I submit that the whole of this pretence of apostolic poverty was simply a rather ingenious advertising stunt which added greatly to the pastor's fame and was attended in practice by many material advantages.

The Value of Bogus Distinctions

As Mr. Dall, the Phrenologist of Motherwell, figures in Rutherford's pages as a "Professor" and "a noted Mental Scientist of the British Institute of Mental Science," so it appears that Mr. Rutherford himself is a "Judge" and presumably a person of importance possessing high legal attainments.

Now with regard to the "British Institute of Mental Science," I may note that that useful handbook, *Whitaker's Almanack*, publishes each year an extensive list of the "Principal Societies and Institutions of Great Britain," numbering some hundreds of entries. But neither at the date of Mr. Dall's supposed phrenograph (1911), nor at the present time, is there mention in *Whitaker* of any such organization as "the British Institute of Mental Science." If it existed at all it must have been something quite contemptible, of which the learned world took no notice.

This tends to cast some suspicion upon the title claimed by Rutherford himself. What was he a Judge of, or where?

I do not doubt that he is an excellent judge of the gullibility of the audiences he addresses, and also a judge of the profound truth underlying the axiom that if you only throw mud enough at your antagonist, a good deal of it is sure to stick. But so far as concerns Rutherford's credentials as a jurist, we have, it appears, to travel for further information to Cooper County, in the State of Missouri, U.S.A. There Dom Richard Felix, a Benedictine, who hails from that part of the country, has made a thorough investigation and has published his discoveries in pamphlet form.

Never Was a Judge

Rutherford is not a judge, nor even an ex-judge. He has never received any such official appointment.

Born in 1869 of a Baptist family in Morgan County (Mo.), he acquired a smattering of legal knowledge while acting as a shorthand writer in the courts. They do not seem to be very exacting about academic qualifications in the Middle West, and though he had never attended any school of law, the young man, in 1892, was granted a licence to practise as an attorney.

It is seemingly the custom in Missouri that when the properly appointed court president is away from home on circuit, it falls to one or other member of the local bar to replace him in hearing minor causes.

In this sense Rutherford acted as temporary judge on four occasions, each for one day only, and it happened on two of these four days that no case came before the court.

Chequered Record

What of his professional character as an attorney? It is certainly not unblemished. In a case cited by Dom

Felix, but too complicated to summarize here, a verdict imputing sharp practice and unscrupulous disregard of well-understood conventions was returned against Rutherford in the Kansas City Court of Appeal in 1897. Moreover, he had already been twice fined for contempt of court in other proceedings, viz., in August, 1894, and again in May, 1895.

After America had come into the War, Rutherford, in 1918, together with six of his associates, all members of the Watchtower Society, was sentenced to 20 years' penal servitude for "unlawfully and wilfully conspiring to cause insubordination, disloyalty and refusal of duty in the military and naval forces of the United States." They all served nine months of their sentence in the Federal Prison at Atlanta, Georgia, but were released in May, 1919.

At this time Rutherford had become president of the organization in succession to Russell, and, were it worth while, a marvellous history could be written of the cabals and intrigues which filled the twelve months following the founder's death. Rutherford was accused of engineering a scheme which, by contesting the validity of Russell's will, enabled him to get rid of four directors who stood in his way.

More Charges Against the 'Judge'

In a pamphlet, *Light After Darkness*, Brother J. G. Madom charged Rutherford and his partisans with disorderly conduct at committee meetings, "hissing in a manner that would resemble bar-room rowdiness," so much so that some present "were offering to call in the police." Another curious document, entitled *Facts for Shareholders of the Watchtower Bible and Tract Society*, charges Rutherford with the misapplication of money advanced by the Society and attributes to him and his party a fraudulent attempt to push the supplementary seventh volume of

Studies in the Scriptures by the pretence that it had all been compiled from Russell's papers, whereas a great deal of the book had been written by others after his death. This book, *The Finished Mystery*, for which undoubtedly Rutherford was mainly responsible, was formally banned by the Canadian Government on the ground of its communistic and socially subversive tendencies.

Moreover, Rutherford was accused of writing a biographical notice of himself which was published at his instigation as if it had been the work of a disinterested third party, one Brother Hirsh. Above all, it was made a subject of complaint that by manipulating the voting methods of the Board of Directors, Rutherford had concentrated all the power into his own hands.

At this distance of time no one can pretend to pronounce upon the rights and wrongs of the case in these bitter recriminations.

The one thing that stands out clearly is the fact that Rutherford's credit for disinterestedness and good faith was violently attacked by several of his brethren who had been numbered among the founder's closest intimates.

But the self-styled Judge is undoubtedly a man of great energy, with an inexhaustible command of vituperative language and a fanatical hatred not only of all whom he terms "religionists," but more especially of the Catholic Church. He knows the mind and temper of the uncultured mob who listen to his addresses, and he takes full advantage of the fact that, so long as his oratory is sufficiently sensational, no improbability or inconsistency in his utterances is likely to stand in the way of their avid acceptance.

"The Finished Mystery"

In the book just mentioned, published, as if it were Russell's posthumous work, at the beginning of Ruther-

ford's accession to power, the increased violence of tone cannot fail to be noticed. An uncompromising assurance that after the Great War the existing order of things would be swept away by anarchy is the dominant note. It was assumed that all forms of religion and all civil governments were doomed to immediate destruction. For example, we are told that "the great ecclesiastical lords and all the adherents of the belong-to-a-church-or-go-to-hell doctrine shall go into oblivion." Against all ecclesiastical organizations, Catholic, Protestant or otherwise, the writer declaims in such terms as these: "God will bring up against them a great rabble of people with a keen sense of outraged justice, socialist, trades-union men, labourites, social-democrats, nihilists and anarchists. Also a multitude of God's children [i.e., the Watchtower associates], begotten of the Holy Spirit, will rise up against these apostasies." Similarly a little further on he continues in language which certainly seems to suggest a sort of alliance: "This multitude will down ecclesiasticism with hard facts, and destroy her with material weapons and with the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God. The anarchists will literally slay church members by millions and the sons of God will by His holy word cause them to cease their pretence of being Christians."

The attitude of Rutherford's adherents, on the other hand, who are presumably real Christians without pretence, is set out in this appeal to the Deity: "All these sects have long ago taken their stand against the Truth and therefore against the Lord. O Lord, judge them with thy Truth. Thou hast called them the 'abominations of the earth' and so they are. Bring their man-made, clergy-ridden systems to an end and make their memory to perish from the earth. Amen."

Jehovah's Witnesses

Another modification introduced under the new leadership was a certain change of name. Without entirely repudiating the old designation, "The Watchtower Bible and Tract Society," the title at present preferred by the adherents of the movement—it cannot properly be called a cult—seems to be "Jehovah's witnesses." In an article headed by these two words in Rutherford's periodical, *Consolation*, for June 28th, 1939, he states that "those who are properly called Jehovah's witnesses are not religionists, for the reason they do not practice religion. They do not compose a sect or a denomination. . . . A religionist is not a witness for Jehovah, FOR THE REASON THAT RELIGION IS AGAINST GOD." What can be the effect of such an utterance, the substance of which is frequently repeated in Rutherford's other writings? It is, I submit, no better than a slogan borrowed from Bolshevik propaganda.

Venomous Attacks

It is part of the same policy to proclaim that the Roman Hierarchy in the United States has coerced the Government of that country into a sort of unholy alliance to favour Catholic schemes of education and to persecute right-thinking students of the Bible. Rutherford's periodicals, *The Watchtower*, and *Consolation* (formerly called *The Golden Age*), abound in vicious cartoons which ridicule all religions and governments, but most of all the Catholic Hierarchy.

The coarse ribaldry of many of these pictures could hardly be exceeded. Indeed they take us back to the language and type of caricature favoured by Martin Luther and the Reformers of his day.

In one of these pictures, for example, a hairy, naked figure, with bestial features, a biretta on his head and a

pectoral cross upon his breast, is carrying under each arm the unclothed body of a woman hanging head downwards.

In another a grinning virago, attired as a nun and labelled "Hierarchy," is represented as threatening with a dagger the helpless body of one of Jehovah's servants, who is confined in a sort of strait-jacket inscribed "Communism."

In yet another we have a huge sow (which bears on its side the word "Jesuits" in gigantic letters) absorbing the contents of a swill-tub. A crowd of little piglings are tugging at its teats. They have names attached to them—"Hitler," "Mussolini," "Farley," "Fascist Press," etc.—while in the background a mitred pontiff, with the features of Pius XI, scatters benedictions, or it may be indulgences, which are apparently destined for the swill-tub.

Could anything be more preposterous than the idea that Hitler, for example, is acting in subservience to the Jesuits? He has suppressed their colleges, submitted their publications to a drastic censorship and is gradually driving them out of the Reich.

And yet this sort of nonsense of an alliance between Hitler and the Jesuits, not to speak of far more sweeping anathemas which denounce the entire Catholic Church as an agency controlled by the devil, is repeated again and again in Rutherford's speeches.

'Wickedest Organization of Hypocrites'

These things are broadcast over the wireless, and with a slight difference of wording recur in a million forms in the Watchtower's vast output of books and pamphlets. This fanatic is never weary of shouting to all who will listen to him: "The Roman Catholic Hierarchy is the wickedest organization of hypocrites that has ever existed upon the earth"; "the Pope is the devil's masterpiece; he is the visible representative of the devil in the world." These are textual quotations.

Since his release from prison in 1919 Rutherford has produced an enormous amount of literature—books, articles, and pamphlets.

The books are advertised for sale in 16 volumes, bound in cloth, with attractive coloured illustrations, and averaging over 350 pages per volume, but procurable at only a shilling apiece, a fact which proves that there must be a considerable amount of money behind the movement.

One cannot help asking oneself where the money comes from. Are the religious interests of such people as the "Fundamentalists" in the U.S.A., or the remnants of those who organized the Ku-Klux-Klan, sufficiently intense to finance this vast propaganda?

Stimulating Communism

Whatever may be the professions of Jehovah's Witnesses, there is no room for doubt that the practical effect of the Watchtower activities is to stimulate Communism, not to say anarchy, and to undermine all feeling of reverence for authority.

It is not only the churches that are brought into disrepute, but every existing form of civil government is derided and caricatured.

The vast extent and penetrating power of this propaganda must not be ignored. Though I am extremely doubtful as to the trustworthiness of the Watchtower statistics, for the advertiser's trump card is to give the impression of big business, still the claim made for the circulation of millions of volumes cannot be all bluff. When it was stated that 1,800,000 copies of Hitler's book, *Mein Kampf*, had been sold, Rutherford's organ replied:

That is nothing at all. In our Brooklyn factory alone 5,620,000 copies have been printed of Judge Rutherford's book *The Harp of God*; 3,403,500 of *Deliverance*; 2,774,000 of *Creation*, etc. . . . The printing of booklets has literally

run into hundreds of millions. Of the last booklet, *Government*, 5,000,000 were printed in the first edition.

Besides the circulation of literature, other methods of attracting public attention have come into existence of late years. If on the one hand the radio activities of the Watchtower in the U.S.A. have recently been very much restricted, Jehovah's Witnesses have started phonograph records and "sound cars," which latter patrol the streets disseminating long sections of the Judge's speeches. You are exhorted in the Watchtower advertisements to allow a representative to wait upon you, who, on his arrival, will play you from the phonograph some of the most telling passages of Rutherford's discourses.

Unknown to Reference Books

But the extraordinary thing is this, that the name of this prophet and soothsayer, whose books are said to distance by many millions the circulation of any best-seller, fiction or otherwise, is treated with contempt by all reference books which provide information on matters of moment. J. F. Rutherford is not mentioned in the standard work, *Who's Who in America for 1938-9*, edited by A. Nelson Marquis, and of the Judge's 16 published volumes there is not a single specimen to be found in the catalogue of the British Museum Library. Not one of the over five million copies of *The Harp of God*, said to have been distributed throughout the world, has been acquired for our great national collection. I have no doubt that Judge Rutherford will assure his admirers that this unpardonable neglect is due to the intrigues of the Catholic Hierarchy or the Jesuits.

The Persecution of Jehovah's Witnesses

There is a story—I fancy it springs from Orange, i.e., North of Ireland, sources—of a man who went to Belfast to visit a patient in hospital there. Not knowing

his way, he stopped a passer-by and asked him: "How will I get to the Mater Infirmorum Hospital? I am rather in a hurry." The passer-by, who was a humorist, replied: "Do you see that alley to the right a little way ahead of us? If you go some 30 yards down that alley and shout 'To hell with the Pope,' you'll find yourself inside the Mater Infirmorum Hospital within exactly 10 minutes."

No one of us would wish to encourage recourse to physical violence as a mode of settling religious controversies. But whether the antagonists be Orangemen or Catholics, Hindus, or Moslems, Arabs or Palestinian Jews, any violently offensive language on either side will inevitably occasion fierce resentment, and may easily lead to rioting of a serious kind.

In point of fact the attacks which are alleged to have been made on Jehovah's Witnesses and of which they make capital in sundry propaganda leaflets, have been ridiculously exaggerated. As the present pamphlet shows, the provocation given has been outrageous, yet the injuries resulting have been trivial as compared with those with which we are familiar in the Kensitite and Fascist disturbances.

What I charge against the Watchtower Organization, alias Jehovah's Witnesses, is that, for 30 years past, and longer, they have with intensified virulence and an ingenious exploitation of every channel of publicity, been shouting "To hell with the Pope" to all whom they could persuade to listen to them.

They may not have used these precise words, but their language has been quite as provocative, and the sentiment has been repeated by Rutherford in his books and pamphlets on a thousand occasions and in every mood and tense. There is not much difference, for example, between "To hell with the Pope" and such an utterance as "The Pope

is the devil's masterpiece. He is the visible representative of the devil in this world." These words occur in Rutherford's periodical *Consolation* (No. 473, p. 4).

If it had only been a matter of libellous books published and sold through the ordinary channels of the trade, the offence would be more trivial; but vast sums of money have been spent in broadcasting this literature and in striving by sound cars, colportage, and other means to force it upon the attention of unwilling recipients.

Rutherford's Broadcasting drastically cut down in the U.S.A.

In the United States, a few years since, this question of the broadcasting of Rutherford's addresses became acute. Many radio companies, in deference to protests from Catholics and other religious bodies, refused to transmit this matter.

A great effort was consequently made by the Watchtower people to impress the House of Representatives by a monster petition which purported to bear two and a half million signatures. Jehovah's Witnesses inveighed against everything in the nature of censorship or discrimination in the broadcasting of religious and political addresses, alleging that such restraints were contrary to the spirit of a free democracy. They strove to introduce new legislation in this sense and sought to impose severe penalties on broadcasting companies which refused to transmit religious and political speeches without censorship. A committee was appointed by the House of Representatives to consider certain modifications proposed in the laws affecting Radio, and the report of the proceedings before the committee was printed as an official paper.

It is a very interesting document from which one would

like to quote pages, to illustrate the hopeless discomfiture of the Watchtower representatives when cross-questioned by members of the committee. The legal advocate employed by Jehovah's Witnesses was a Mr. Wertz. He was asked whether Catholics would be likely to complain of the following passages which had been broadcast in Judge Rutherford's speech "Intolerance":

For many centuries the Catholic hierarchy have operated the most cruel, wicked, and defamatory organization that has ever been on the earth. They employ coercion and the gag, and any other unlawful means necessary to accomplish their cruel purposes. When they want someone killed they make the killer believe that the priests can fully absolve them from all wrong and clear him from all punishment, either here or hereafter.

"Do you imagine," asked Mr. Walter, one of the committee, "that this would cause Catholics to complain?"

Mr. Wertz: "I imagine it might; I do not know."

Mr. Sirovich: "As a lawyer do you approve of that statement?"

Mr. Wertz: "I would not send it out myself personally."

Mr. Sirovich: "You would not? You are personally opposed to that statement?"

Mr. Wertz: "I do not want to answer the question that way. I say I would not send it out."

Mr. Walter: "You know, as a matter of fact, it is not true, on the face of it?"

Mr. Wertz: "That is probably perhaps unfortunate; there are many statements that are good and right, and they ought not to be spoilt by unfortunate statements like that."

Failure of the Great Petition

What the questions in the same official report—it runs to 226 pages—bring out clearly is that Rutherford's broadcasts were absolutely indefensible as regards the provoca-

tive language employed. As to the statement that two and a half millions of people had signed a petition urging that the free transmission of religious addresses like Rutherford's should not be interfered with, Mr. Aylesworth, president of the National Broadcasting Company, New York, which had refused to transmit invectives of this type, had evidently formed very definite conclusions as to the worthlessness of such petitions. He said :

" I have had a great deal of experience in filing petitions and getting them signed. I would like to know what the heading was. If the heading was ' Do you want to hear the Watchtower programmes,' and the people who signed knew what they are, I think that is an intelligent expression of sentiment. If you have at the top of the petition ' Do you believe in free religious discussion, free religious programmes ? ' I believe everybody would sign this for fear we might take off free religious programmes to-day. You can probably get ten million people or fifty million people to sign petitions on almost anything."

In a signed statement presented to the committee of the House of Representatives, Rutherford gave this account of himself : " My name is Joseph F. Rutherford. . . . I am, and since 1917, have been the president of the following organizations or corporations, to wit : Watchtower Bible and Tract Society, People's Pulpit Association, International Bible Students' Association, all of which are in fact one and the same, and engaged in identically the same work, being organized in different places and under different names for convenience."

He was, then, as noted above, president of the Watchtower organization when he was sentenced on June 22, 1918, to 20 years' imprisonment for unlawfully and wilfully conspiring to cause insubordination, disloyalty, and refusal

of duty to the military and naval forces of the United States.

It was not therefore only the Catholic Church which he attacked. For the past 20 years he has carried on a campaign against all organized religion, Catholic, Protestant, and even Jewish. For instance we read " The Roman Catholic Hierarchy, the Protestant clergy and the Jewish rabbis walk hand in hand . . . and persecute every one who dares to tell the truth of and concerning God's kingdom."

So again a witness before the committee showed by definite citations that Rutherford denounced " The unholy alliance formed by the Catholic organization headed by its weighty Pontiff, the multitudinous divisions of the Protestant organizations headed by their wise and eloquent clergy, and the Jews, led by their philosophical rabbis," adding that " Satan's is the master mind that has organized a conspiracy against Jehovah and His faithful Witnesses." In view of the fact that Pastor Russell was one of the pioneers of Zionism and prophesied the triumph of the Jews in many passages of his works, the attitude of his successor does not seem very consistent.

Much indignation was expressed by the Watchtower people when Canada refused to allow Rutherford's addresses to be broadcast ; but the following passage in the report of the United States Committee, when Mr. Goux, the Watchtower secretary, appeared before them, is interesting :

Mr. Sirovich : Have you been denied any of the privileges you are seeking here in any foreign countries ?

Mr. Goux : In Canada the clergy were instrumental in inducing the radio commission to interfere in the stopping of these broadcasts in the stations there.

Mr. Sirovich : What clergy ?

Mr. Goux : The Anglican clergy, the clergy of the Church of England.

Mr. Walter: What evidence have you to substantiate that statement?

Mr. Goux: We have the statement of the chairman of the Canadian Radio Commission, in an announcement which he made in January, 1933, an official announcement specifically identifying these men: and in addition, we have the names of the men, who, on their own admission, made these representations to the commissions there.

Most astonishing of all perhaps is the attitude of Rutherford regarding the civil authority and the saluting of the American or any national flag. He seems to regard it as an act of idolatry. "Flag-saluting," he declares explicitly, "is in direct violation of God's law."

But a detailed account of all Rutherford's extravagances would make an endless story. "His writings and lectures," says a non-Catholic critic, "form a veritable labyrinth of noxious nonsense that has neither definite beginning nor logical ending."

Theological Views

Mr. Koerber, a leading Watchtower official, when expressly questioned on the subject before the committee, repudiated the suggestion that Rutherford denied the divinity of Christ. But in the "Judge's" book, *The Harp of God*, of which it is averred that millions of copies have been sold, we are told that the Lord was a creature, a spiritual being in heaven before He became incarnate, that in incarnation He ceased to be a spiritual being and became a human being, neither more nor less, that at His baptism He received the divine nature, and yet in resurrection He is said to have been "born to the divine nature." This is a specimen of the valuable conclusions at which this learned "international" society of scripture students, hardly one of whom is acquainted with any other language

than his own vernacular tongue, have arrived after 30 or 40 years of collaboration and intensified study.

To illustrate Rutherford's tenets regarding the Incarnation, a passage may be quoted from his book *Prophecy*, which is by no means to be accounted as the most inflammatory of his diatribes. Is it altogether surprising that even the Anglican episcopate in a country in which the vast majority of the inhabitants have been baptised in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, should be scandalized at his speaking of "the wicked and devilish doctrine of the so-called 'holy trinity' "? Here are his actual words (*Prophecy*, p. 280):

" 'Organized Christianity,' so called, changes the first and great commandment, and causes the people of the earth to bow down to a man, as, for example, the head of the Roman system. . . . If the religious teachers of 'organized Christianity' loved God they would keep his commandments. . . . Instead of so doing, they deny the Bible account of creation and the fall of man, and redemption through the blood of Christ Jesus. They teach THE WICKED AND DEVILISH DOCTRINE OF THE SO-CALLED HOLY TRINITY, in which they make Jesus and the 'Holy Ghost' equal with Jehovah God, and they fail to show any love for either God or Christ Jesus."

What can at any rate be said with truth is that in the whole of the Watchtower teaching there is absolutely nothing constructive. "This organization," declared their advocate to the American Committee on Radio, "has no creed." But it seeks to pull down all creeds. It scoffs at loyalty to churches, governments, and social usages. Instead of the spirit of peace, it instils bitter hatred. It encourages the uneducated rabble, with whom its message finds most favour, to expect in the immediate future an upheaval and convulsion such as the world has never witnessed. Thousands of them will be tempted to say,

" Since the end is so near at hand, why should we not anticipate a little and begin the racket now ? " Whatever the real intentions of Jehovah's Witnesses may be, their acts are the very opposite of those of the martyrs, i.e., the true *witnesses* of Christ. Discipline, forbearance, submission, charity, do not exist for them ; they are the all-but avowed apostles of revolution and anarchy to come.